



THE PERCEPTION OF MTsN MA'RANG STUDENTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMANISTIC APPROACH IN TEACHING WRITING

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) taught in all school levels. So, the effective teaching methods should be employed by the English teachers in achieving the successfulness of EFL teaching and learning process. In order to bring much more benefits for the teachers' improvement, evaluating teachers' teaching in the classroom should be conducted. Analyzing the students' perception becomes one of the ways to use. Hence, the researcher conducted a research that aimed to describe the students' perception about learning activities through humanistic approach in learning writing especially CLL (Community Language Learning) as one method used in applying this approach. This research employed a qualitative experiment research design. A qualitative experiment seeks to produce a description, typically without the use of numbers. It can be subjective in that the results are based on the experimenters' point of view. Several methods are used in a qualitative experiments; introspection, surveys and questionnaires, and direct observation. These methods mostly involved observation of the user from the researcher. In selecting the participant, the researcher used purposive sampling technique where the participants were chosen based on certain criteria. The purposive sampling technique was used to collect the subjects at MTsN Ma'rang. The data were collected by employing observation and interview. From the data collected, the research found finding based on the research objective. There are four learning activities perceived as positive learning activities. They are Group work, Translation, Free Conversation, and Analysis. There are two learning activities perceived as negative learning activities. They are recording and analysis.

Key words: *Students' Perceptions, Humanistic Approach, Learning Activities, Teaching Writing.*

INTRODUCTION

One of the failure factors of education in formal education primarily is ignoring the

humanistic approach to education. The students are educated beyond the limits of their needs and capabilities, both in terms of

teaching materials, objectives, methods, techniques, and learning strategies.

Humanism movement is a part of the renaissance movement in the 16th century that put humans as the center of attention. Humanist spirit gets encouragement from Petrarca (1304-1374) and Boccaccio (1313-1375) who inspired scholars all over the western world. Humanistic studies in the fields of literature, art, and history have spread among scholars and students at universities in Italy, France, Spain, Germany, and England. This, in turn, has influenced the curriculum at Harvard and other universities in the United States. The western humanists make the study of classical literature. Thus nowadays, it is ironic if language learning is away from the humanistic spirit.

One of the humanistic education characteristics is employed in accordance with the learning needs of students. A person who wants to work abroad can master the English language spoken in a relatively short time because learning English is taught based on their needs. In the other hand, learning English in formal educational institutions is conducted by taking into account the needs of individual learners should be able to succeed.

Learning English should get maximum attention. This is because, learning English language has become popular in many Asian countries and recently English has been taught as one of the main foreign languages in Indonesia but the expected result is not

optimal. In fact, there are among them who have learned English from primary education to higher education in, but have not been able to use the English language, either passively or actively, both orally and in writing. Learning writing, as a part of learning English in Indonesia, which has become one obvious example is not maximal in learning English.

Essentially, the language has a basic function as a means of expressing or expressing the human mind. There are four basic skills in English to express the human mind. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is a process of language acquisition through the sounds of language, speaking is a skill to communicate with others by oral form, reading is reading the results of the human mind as outlined in writing, while writing is an expression of language through written form.

Based on the four-language skills above, the researcher thinks that writing is also important as other language skills. In fact, the ideas in the written language media is media that is scientifically and legally. As an example, a variety of writing can be used as evidence in court, even it can be the historical facts that can show the generation history from the past until now. It can be seen in the western world in the era Europe renaissance that can not be separated from the role of the books as the written record of the work of scientists thinking.

According to Ahmadi and Prasetya that principle problems of learning writing can be

categorized in three aspects , namely (1) the psychological problem that the reluctance of students in writing psychologically due to lack of talent and difficulty its own level of using language that is not the language of the student 's itself . Thus, a sense of the language does not come naturally. (2) Pedagogical problem that science teaching foreign languages to non-native speakers is also a problem in itself. The problem comes from the pedagogical error in positioning students as inanimate objects that can be modified in accordance with the wishes of their teacher. Other Fallacy is to apply the approach, methods, techniques, strategies, use of media, evaluation and so on that do not pay attention to the students as the subject and object of research, and (3) Linguistic problem that basically in writing is a process of translation from the students' mother tongue into English which is not their language itself so there is language grammar or vocabulary improper election. Finally, learning writing is no different to translate literally from Indonesian as the native language into English without regarding to differences in the structure of the grammar of the languages and vocabulary selection.

Students have the problems that different from one another. The problems can arise due to psychological misinformation about English learning, including learning writing. Many students assume that English is difficult. Though these assumptions are false due to the

nature of language learning which is universal and humane.

Language is a communication tool used by human beings, whether oral or written. Therefore, learning English cannot be separated from the humanistic psychological aspects. Learning English should use the curriculum to suit the students. According to the law of the national education system (2007), curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the purpose, content, teaching materials and methods used to guide the organization of learning activities to achieve specific educational goals. Student as the object of education is to be placed as a human who has different talents, interests, and abilities. Therefore, the curriculum of learning writing should promote pedagogical dimension of humanity in order to overcome the problems. The devices curriculum of learning English can be as approaches, strategies, methods, techniques, media, and evaluation of learning. The linguistic problems can be handling by using syllabus according to the needs and abilities of students.

From the humanistic process perspective, Rogers (1961) cited in Zhang (2010) advocates a student-centered approach. He underlied relevance, participation, negotiation, self-assessment, the centrality of the self-actualizing potential, and the reach for personal manifestation and creativity in fulfilling individual learning needs.

In line with Rogers' idea, Hamachek (1977) cited in Williams & Burden, (1997) pointed out the significance of humanistic approach in language teaching: "humanistic education starts with the idea that students are different, and it strives to help students to be more like themselves and less like each other", while writing is a form to express themselves and their different ideas so the humanistic approach was applied in learning writing for this research.

Based on the explanation above, there is an inseparable relationship between the humanistic approaches with the pedagogical tools of learning writing. Humanistic approach is one of approaches in learning that emphasizes the principles of humanity, whereas writing is a form of expression of human mind through written language. The humanistic approach is worthily considered since its main principle is bringing the learning process towards a more affective situation by combining the subject matter to be learned with the feeling, emotions, experiences, and lives of the students. If the two are combined and correlated variables, it is expected to give positively influence to each other in improving the learning ability of students in writing especially the students of MTsN Ma'rang.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative experiment. Thomas (2002) in Atmowardoyo (2010, p.76-77) states that two important research methods are qualitative and

quantitative. A qualitative experiment seeks to produce a description, typically without the use of numbers. It can be subjective in that the results are based on the experimenters' point of view. Several methods are used in a qualitative experiments; introspection, surveys and questionnaires, and direct observation. These methods mostly involved observation of the user from the researcher.

The technique of data analysis employed in this research was done based on descriptive analysis, in which the researcher analyzed the data collected through the instruments. Miles and Huberman (1984) in Emzir (2010: 129-136) assume that there are some steps in analyzing the data. They were: (1) data collection, (2) data reduction, (3) data display, and (4) conclusion (drawing / verifying).

FINDINGS

In order to find out the problem statement formulated before, the researcher used interview to know students' perceptions about the implementation of humanistic approach in teaching writing. The researcher interviewed the students after they were taught using this approach especially using CLL (Community Language Learning) as one method used in applying this approach.

The data collected has found the main theme based on the problem statement formulated before, which is:

MTsN Ma'rang students' perception about learning activities through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.

a) Positive perception

There are some positive perception in regarding to the learning activities through humanistic approach in learning writing. The following learning activities would be positively the MTsN Ma'rang students' perception:

1) Group work

Students engaged in various group tasks, such as small-group discussion of a topic, preparing a conversation, preparing a summary of a topic for presentation to another group, preparing a story that would be presented to the teacher and the rest of the class. The students worked in group where they discussed about the topic that they want to write.

After getting the data from the observation, the researcher did interview about their opinion. Of the twenty students, there were ten students who perceived that group work was the most interesting classroom activities. They felt that in group work, they could discuss and share idea each other.

2) Translation

In this part, the students whispered a message or meaning he or she wanted to express, the teacher translated it into (and may interpret it in) the target

language, and the student repeated the teacher's translation. The students particularly stated that they could understand and knew more vocabulary when their teacher translated into the target language. In this part illustrated where the translated the difficult word into the target language and asked the students to repeat the teacher translation.

After getting the data from the observation, the researcher did interview about their opinion.

3) Free conversation

Students engaged in free conversation with the teacher or with the other students. This included discussion of what they learned as well as what they felt. The students felt free to express their opinion and what they felt after learning process. the students also felt enjoy to speak freely with the teacher and other students.

4) Analysis

Students analyzed and studied transcriptions of target-language sentences in order to focus on particular lexical usage or on the application of particular grammar rules. As a student, she realized that a method in teaching writing in English should consider grammar rules in order to achieve English language teaching goal.

b) Negative perception

On the contrary, the students also have their own perception about what the negative or ineffective learning activities. From their perception, some learning activities would be negatively perception the MTsN Ma'rang students' perception:

1) Recording

The students faced some difficulties when they recorded conversations in the target language. Some students felt uncomfortable to record their conversation and felt restricted.

2) Analysis

In this term, the student assigned that they felt not really understand when they were taught too much grammar or structure. It made them bored.

DISCUSSIONS

This part discusses the finding described on the previous part above. The finding showed students' perceptions about the learning activities through humanistic approach in learning writing. Based on the students' perceptions about the learning activities, the researcher found four learning activities would be positively the MTsN Ma'rang students' perception and two learning activities would be negatively the MTsN Ma'rang students' perception. Both of the positive and negative learning activities perceived by students were discussed separately. The reasons of why the learning activities is perceived by students as

positive or negative will be described in every learning activities discussed.

MTsN Ma'rang students' perception about learning activities through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.

a) Positive Learning Activities Perceived by Students

Based on the students' perception emerged, there were four learning activities found. They were:

1) Group Work

Group work are essential features of a student centered classroom. In the group work, students interact with one another. How the students experience the learning process is influenced by their relationship with their classmates, as it was pointed out by Schmuk in Josefa J. Mardijono (2001, p.95) that "the nature of the interpersonal relationships in the classroom is a major influence on the teaching learning process."

From the statement above, most of the students believed that group work led to the understanding that each student played an important role to create a conducive learning atmosphere. Thus, they need to co-operate, sharing and support one another to develop their writing skill.

Moreover, student felt more secure about sharing ideas and opinions in small group (Garret & Shortall, 2002). Student with one another tended not to

feel anxious or afraid to make mistake as they were all at the same level and working toward the same goal.

This learning activities also assigns the student center. It was also found in the students' perception. They stated that working with the other friends could give them more benefit such as they can share their knowledge. They also can solve the problem found together. In this learning activities, it called student-student interaction.

The effectiveness of this learning activities showed by the students in their perception also found in an experimental research conducted by Pei Long (2011), she found that it should be implemented intensively and extensively in ELT classes because the employment of such strategies proved to be more effective in improving the students' language proficiency.

2) Translation

In translation, the students whispers a message or meaning he or she wants to express, the teacher translates it into (and may interpret it in) the target language, and the student repeat the teacher's translation.

The student role in CLL are well define. The students freely provide meanings they wish to express, to repeat target utterances without hesitation.

From the student role, as shown above, the students particularly stated that they could understand and knew more vocabulary when their teacher translate into the target language. They stated so because they could use the vocabulary when writing in English.

3) Free Conversation

In this term, the students engage in free conversation with the teacher or with other students. This might include discussion of what they learned as well as feeling they had about how they learned.

This findings of this research about free conversation in line with Rivers (1983, p.23) states that humanistic approach, students are encouraged to talk about themselves, to be open with others, and to express their feelings.

4) Analysis

In this term, students analyze and study transcriptions of target-language sentences in order to focus on particular lexical usage or on the application of particular grammar rules. Based on the students' perception, they perceived that vocabulary and grammar be taught in meaningful context. As they stated in finding, they learning its grammar more fun doing in the group work. This activity, also assign the student teacher. It was also found in the students' perception.

b) Negative Learning Activities Perceived by Students

Based on the students' perception emerged, there were two learning activities found. They were:

1) Recording

Recording was mostly emerged as negative learning activity by student. In this activity, students record conversations in the target language. The students feel uncomfortable record their conversation and feel restricted.

2) Analysis

Analysis is an activity studied a language through detailed analysis of its grammar rules. Based on the students' perception, this activity was found as negative learning activity. The student not really understand about the grammatical rule.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous part, the researcher states to the following conclusions:

Applying humanistic approach in teaching and learning process in the class was very important and needed by the students. Humanistic approach has created a cooperative and supportive group atmosphere and given positive attitude and feeling towards the lesson.

Learning writing by writing on a topic choosen by the students, freely express their opinions and make them to be more effective in improving the writing ability. Therefore, they perceived that writing as more interesting, easier, they learned more about themselves, they felt more joyful and generally better.

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